British Consulate Rome Nov 19
1861

My dear Alexia

I know how pleased you'll be to get a line from me & that I can tell you all good news about myself tho' I regret to say not so of the dear Mater - 3 weeks have passed without a word from Dunkirk & I fear that serious illness may detain her, but yet she wrote in good spirits & hopes I was to come on with two ladies — ~~There~~, I have got such a house for her & a room with the sun all day "from morn to dewy eve" indeed I have been lucky in a house not only at a most moderate rent but of such ample room in a gigantic Palace which is more than a quarter mile long — but I am furnishing very humbly as yet, & attendance I have got made for my money — as yet only two rooms habitable, my office & sitting room

but the grandeur of the rooms carries the day & does not permit any thing really modern for the Palace is in the old style & so I pick up old carved things

The first night I awoke in the night & coughed & was frightened at the deep echo thro the rooms for I had left the doors open & how you'd be amused to see me at dinner with Arthur in a large saloon 32 feet square & 28 feet high with nothing in it but ourselves & the dinner — but it's a cheerful house on account of the high windows & sun

I have sunk down quite into my old Roman life, large Palace, with old pictures & I am so fortunate as to be honored with the friendship of an English Countess (Castle Stuart) who has a beautiful Villa & Garden & I go there to dine — then I have a dear old maid (you know I had a fad still Mackenzie) She is Miss Cushman

the great Roman actress who is settled
here & is a valuable fr – Mrs my house
keeper is called also "Teresa" – Just
now I have had the present of 20
beautiful plants in pots for my ante
room – but Oh! every thing is so dear
that I am quite bewildered, dearer
than London & I have some puzzle
to make both ends meet & to turn over
every penny, but however in my care
fulness I have been able to save a
good deal in my purchases –

As regards my work it is wonderful
how my new life suits me even in the
activity – when I open my eyes at dawn
I think over the good I can do during
the day & how I can do it – & would be
surprised how much I undertake that
has nothing to do with me, save in the
rights of humanity – and so strive to get
persecuted people out of prison, amongst
the Romans I mean & always succeed
for the authorities are very civil & grant

of an audience on state matters to find
myself carrying the day & with a little
spice of fun doing all pleasant — Perhaps
the Italian helps me for it is more
elastic than English & admits of a joke
which has the good effect of preventing
ponderousness & tiresomeness — My picture
of Carracci is pronounced to be a real
original of great value, worthy to be
in a national Gallery so I hope to make
a pretty penny of it when the time comes
But every is dear — that I can scarce
make both ends meet, & my wife very
sick on her journey I am in a dead fix
Yet I assure you my dear Tom that I am
very happy in my new life & the daily power
of doing good is a felicity alone — Good
bye — how often I long to pop in upon you
on Sunday eve. & have a laugh, however
until the time comes when people can send
their souls about by telegraph — I have no
hope — for I cannot be absent a day — My
love to all your dear ones — Your loving
Brother